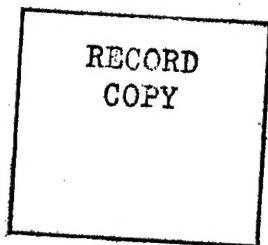


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BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AND WATER UTILIZATION WORK IN

NORTH VIETNAM

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FOREWORD

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BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AND WATER UTILIZATION WORK IN
NORTH VIETNAM

[Following is a translation of selected articles from various issues of the Vietnamese-language newspaper Nhan Dan, Hanoi. Specific source data is given under individual article headings.]

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I. HO BRIDGE HAS PILINGS COMPLETED 17 DAYS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

6 May 1960

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Unsigned article

After 32 days and nights of working hard and overcoming difficulties, workers of the bridge-work team number 4 completed the construction of 60 concrete and steel pilings for the Ho bridge at Cam Xuyen, Ha Tinh, 17 days ahead of schedule, thus freeing 510 workers and paving 1,712 piastres. The constructing of pilings 19 meters long, weighing 5.5 tons, with machine scaffoldings 24 meters high and weighing more than 20 tons was a new challenge, but our workers developed an initiative that helped improve their construction technique and therefore boosted the construction speed from 2 to 3 pilings a day.

At present, the bridge-work team number 4 is entering a new phase of competition, determined to complete the laying of girders before 2 September 1960 as a contribution to the celebrating of the 15th anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

II. FORMAL INAUGURATION OF TAY BRIDGE IN HAIPHONG

6 May 1960

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On 30 April 1960, the Administrative Committee and Communications-Transport Service of Haiphong inaugurated the Tay bridge, near the Deo mountain, Thuy Nguyen, in the suburban area of Haiphong. The Tay bridge lies on route 209 of the province which links together the Mao Khe coal mine, the Haiphong port and the Hongay coal mine. The bridge supporting columns were made extremely strong to withstand the huge amount of water that flows down from the Deo mountain, and therefore to guarantee continuous traffic and avoid floods.

A bridge had been built here 60 years ago, but was destroyed. Now we have rebuilt a stronger, wider and more beautiful one. Its capacity is now twice as much as the first one.

The bridge-work team of the Haiphong Communications-Transport Service is composed of 13 young men and women less than 23 years of age. As they set to work for the first time, they met many technical difficulties and difficulties that were related to working facilities. But, owing to their socialist labor enthusiasm, self-confidence and thanks to the effective assistance of the government and local organizations, within 58 days they completed their work 2 days ahead of schedule. Not only was the quality of their work good, but in addition, they helped save 994 dong of public money.

III. SEVERAL LESSONS LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCES IN WATER UTILIZATION WORK

6 May 1960
Page 3

Nguyen Van Loc, Undersecretary
Ministry of water Utilization

A year of struggle in the field of water utilization work has brought to our people great achievements never before seen.

Our people have dug or tamped over 84 million cubic meters of soil and created tens of thousands of water utilization works. As compared with the period under French rule in which an average of a million cubic meters was recorded per year, in the year 1959 alone we achieved what was supposed to be achieved in 80 years.

The water utilization work contributed greatly to the success of last year's rice crops. Even in the winter-spring crop, in spite of a lack of rain or too little rain for 6 months, the maximum area of drought-affected lands at the end of last February was just a little over 30,000 hectares, much less than the figure recorded at the same time in 1959 (90,000 hectares).

Such was the result of our people's brave struggle under Party leadership; such was also the actual outcome of the water utilization policy prescribed by our Party. Last year's achievements in the field of water utilization work were a remarkable contribution to the raising of the people's living standard. Another remarkable gain is that millions of farmers began to realize that under Party leadership, men could very well master nature. The 1959 water utilization work conference, convened by the Party Central Committee in March, 1960, already confirmed the above points.

Since the end of this conference, the people's water utilization movement has undergone changes. The conference resolution and President Ho's instructions and recommendations by representatives of the Party Central Committee were carefully studied and popularized by local committees, and are becoming physical driving forces. We confirm the greatness of last year's achievements and the rightness of the water utilization policy; but at the same time, we also see some existing shortcomings and weaknesses which need to be corrected and from which we can draw precious experiences.

1. We are in the phase of economic reform and development and progress toward socialism -- a phase in which agricultural development is the main concern. To develop agriculture we have first to eliminate natural calamities such as drought, flood, and salt water inundation which every year damages our crops. To eliminate such calamities we must first pay attention to water utilization work. This work has become one of the human deciding factors which help boost agricultural production. Not only is it urgent at present, but also, in order to serve well the demands of economic development in each new phase, it

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will become more and more important as the speed of economic and social development increases. The actual situation last year showed us that any local area which was following closely the Party policy in water utilization work did secure a successful crop, an improvement of the population's living, an enthusiasm and more confidence in the Party and the Government among the people, and happy effects upon other kinds of work.

The Xuan Khe village in the district of Ly Nhan (Ha Nam) has nearly a thousand hectares of land. In the past, only 60 hectares had been used for the 10th-month rice crop; the rest had been used for the 5th-month one; the average output had been about 150 kilograms of rice per person. But thanks to good water utilization work, the Xuan Khe village used more than 800 hectares for the 10th-month rice crop; its average productivity was 570 kilograms of rice per person. Many villages in mountainous, midland, delta and coastal areas obtained as good water utilization work as Xuan Khe's, and did obtain similar achievements.

On the contrary, any area which was indifferent to water utilization work did face difficulties in rice production, obstacles in other fields of activities and poverty among the population. In areas of this sort, the local agents and population had the tendency to fear difficulties and to doubt the measures for combating such difficulties whenever they heard about the water utilization policy. How could we solve this problem of adopting measures? The experiences of the 1959 water utilization work have shown us that the best solution lies in the fact that if the idea is widely popularized, the people will successfully discover the best measures. Also, the many good examples of successful areas will help us to find more easily the right measures.

2. In order to speed up the construction of water utilization projects, we have to rely on the people's organized force, develop the socialist spirit of cooperation, and consider as main factors our cooperatives and people's organizations.

The water utilization work is one that needs a concentration of force. To have the strength and the wisdom of the collective mass is to possibly solve all difficulties, develop the people's initiative and provide the very means and conditions for achievement of reforms and improvement of agricultural implements and techniques. On the other hand, also on the basis of this collective labor, we have to continue strengthening the collective spirit and understanding of socialism among the people. The Dai Ban village in the An Duong (Kien An) district availed itself of the 1958-59 winter-spring drive for water utilization work among the people to popularize the policy of collectivizing agriculture and combining the studying of agricultural collectivization with the teaching of the water utilization policy. The result was that during that crop, each villager succeeded in doing water utilization work up to 18 cubic meters. Also, 14 more cooperatives were set up. In the provinces of Hung Yen, Yen Bai, Bac Ninh,

Phu Tho, Ha Nam, etc., many local villages did good water utilization work, thanks to local cooperatives; at the same time, this work reflected its good effects upon the consolidating and developing of agricultural cooperatives.

The mutual association between developing and consolidating cooperatives and boosting water utilization work is a fact that was proved clearly in many local areas in 1959. The fast progress of the movement toward agricultural collectivization enhances water utilization work.

Water utilization work is also associated closely with other kinds of work. If we know how to tightly combine our water utilization work with the entire work in rural areas, we will certainly achieve great success in many fields of action.

3. From our observation, we can say that the water utilization work is one that has a political, popular character as well as a scientific and technological character. We need to try to raise gradually the people's scientific and technological capacity.

The people are those who create history, science and technology. The leadership should recognize that fact. To do so, our leaders should consider and popularize the people's experiences and at the same time combine together the advanced water utilization work techniques and those techniques the people have developed themselves, thus raising the over-all quality of our techniques.

In the last year, many local areas (Yen Bai, Vinh Phuc, Kien An, Ninh Binh, etc.) completed many complex works by themselves just because they knew how to popularize techniques and exploit the people's age-old experiences and creativeness.

On the other hand, if we simply pay attention to bringing experiences from one place to another without knowing how to combine them with the actual local situation and advanced techniques, we will risk the whole work. Or if we think that new scientific techniques will be too hard for the people to understand, that the people's techniques will not need consideration, we will not only fail to assist the people but also be unable to exploit their precious assets.

To raise further the people's technological capacity not only means a lot to our task of guaranteeing the quality of our work and limiting damages, but also helps to drive the people's movement toward new stages of our water utilization work. We need to mobilize and develop the technological force and strengthen its quality.

4. We must have definite water utilization plans. Once the people's mind has been opened to the usefulness of our water utilization work, we have to make plans for them to follow. Without definite plans, there will be only a groping in the dark and also a waste of effort. On the other hand, water utilization plans must be made by the people to insure their working hard to achieve them. The two matters cannot be separated from each other.

In the task of boosting our water utilization work as a whole the main thing is to strengthen Party leadership over this work. Only when the Party committees, and first of all the comrade secretary, fully recognize the importance of our water utilization work and turn the Party policy into the people's deeds, will water utilization work become a movement of the people. On the other hand, we must improve and strengthen the local water utilization work offices and turn them into an actual part of each local Party committee.

Above are some lessons we have drawn from the people's movement toward doing water utilization work last year. The present situation requires us to study and utilize past experiences to make our water utilization work movement a nation-wide one, thus advancing the rural areas in the north of our country to socialist prosperity.

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